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EPISTLE

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN, EARL OF SANDWICH, &c.

OR, THE

BRITISH HERO DISPLAYED.

A POEM.

LONDON,

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[M.DCC.LXXX.]

PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN MONTAGU,

EARL OF SANDWICH,

VISCOUNT HINCHINGBROOK,

FIRST LORD COMMISSIONER

OF THE ADMIRALTY;

WHOSE ABILITIES IN THE SENATE,

AS WELL AS THE NAVAL DEPARTMENT,

NEED NO PANEGYRIC;

THIS EPISTLE,

WITH A FARTHER WISH OF SUCCESS TO

HIS MAJESTY's ARMS

UNDER HIS LORDSHIP's AUSPICIOUS CONDUCT,

IS INSCRIBED BY,

HIS OBEDIENT,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

JOHN WILLIAM PIERCY.

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EARL OF SANDWICH,

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OF THE ADMIRALTY;

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THIS TRIBUTE

WITH A HEARTY WISH OF SUCCESS TO

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UNDER HIS LORDSHIP'S AUSPICIOUS CONDUCT,

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JOHN WILLIAM PIERCY.

EPISTLE

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN, EARL OF SANDWICH, &c.

WHILE merry bards in ſtrains harmonious ſing,
And fit their numbers to the tuneful ſtring;
The conſcious winds their trembling accents raiſe,
Call forth their plaudits, and promote their lays;
Th' encreaſing breeze ſoon ſpreads itſelf around,
And *diſtant heroes* whiſper in the ſound:
So while they ſhine in each diſtinguiſh'd zone,
The winds conſpire and waft them to our own;
Pleas'd PHŒBUS hears the gentle zephyrs riſe,
Strikes his ſweet lyre, and wafts them to the ſkies.

O MONTAGU! in whom this bark of State
Braves the wide dangers of impending fate;
While Vict'ry rears her ſilken flag on high,
And *io pæans* rend th' applauding ſky;
While liſt'ning Ocean rolls his waves along,
And ALBION's cliffs reſound the grateful ſong;
No daring tongue can reprobate your name,
No hand of envy check your riſing fame;
With manly ſoul each empty charge abide,
Nor fear the terrors of ambitious pride.

Plac'd here by Nature, in one mould we ſtand;
She dealt her favors with an equal hand;
For though ſhe gave one ſon the Muſes fire,
To win the paſſions as the verſe inſpire;
One ſon to ſhine a genius in debate,
To fix an empire, or to fix its fate;
Impartial, to another ſhe decreed
Such paſſing ſtrength, he rivals with the ſteed;
'Tis only Fortune errs in this we find,
She dealt her favors, but ſhe dealt them blind.

Since

Since thus diſpos'd, and mortals in this ſtate,
One common ſpur ſhould move us——*to be great:*
And he who's not ambitious to be high,
Had better leave the world, and like a coward die.

Yet hard to think, while through this life we ſail,
And brave the dangers of each doubtful gale;
While from *Scyllæan* rocks we nicely fly,
The foul *Charybdis,* ſome new peſt is nigh;
Thus if when all our weary'd toils are o'er,
We live the tempeſt, and approach the ſhore,
Where guardian *Honor* keeps the ſacred ſhrine,
And *Fame*'s bright pyramids in Beauty ſhine;
Rapacious *Envy* views the lofty fane,
And mourns the laurel ſhe can never gain.

EUPHRENUS once a miniſter of ſtate,
In council bold, yet ſteady and ſedate;
With honeſt zeal, and toil inceſſant ſtrove
To bind the tye of patriotic love;
Plac'd at the helm the ſkilful pilot ſtood,
And ſtemm'd the torrent for the public good;

Borne

Borne by his Wiſdom, how each navy rode!
His barks immortal, as himſelf a god!
The hoſtile banner own'd their ſov'reign ſway,
And diſtant nations glory'd to obey;
The ſoldier roſe obedient at command,
And fought his glories in a foreign land;
Th' aſtoniſh'd world with admiration ſaw,
Rever'd their conqu'ring lords, and bow'd their necks in awe.

Yet biting *Envy*, watchful of her prey,
Hid in refulgent honors, ſtole her way;
So buds the thorn where ſweet narciſſus blows,
Or lurks beneath the fragrance of the roſe;
A good EUPHRENUS could not ſhun her chain,
He felt her ſting; but, ah! ſhe ſtung in vain.

Think not, my Lord, in your exalted ſtate,
For ev'ry eye reflects upon the great;
Think not to 'ſcape where *Calumny* reſides,
And frowning *Envy* ſwells her venom'd ſides;
She lives attendant where there breathes a pow'r,
A CÆSAR found her in his happieſt hour.

When

When Faction ſounds her trumpet to the ſky,
Her ſons advance, and in her cauſe defy;
With eloquential weapons they engage,
And change the ſacred ſenate to the ſtage;
Like *Bombardians** bombaſtic rend,
Who knows to what this rival ſtrife may tend?
And when they rant the foremoſt in the race,
Who knows but they're the foremoſt—*for a place;*
Here too malignant *Envy* mounts her throne,
And weeps your honors greater than her own;
But fear her not; the bleeding page can tell
Th' ambitious POMPEY for his envy fell.

But perſevere while †Fortune deigns to ſmile,
And add freſh laurels to this martial iſle;
So ſhall APOLLO tune his choiceſt lays,
And ev'ry muſe be grateful in your praiſe;
The marble buſt midſt other urns ſhall ſhine,
And hail the ſtateſman as he reads th' inſcriptive line.

* A Character in the Tragi-Comedy of Chrononothonthologos.

† This was wrote at the time of Sir George Rodney's late ſucceſs over the Spaniards.

Immortal ROME far diſtant worlds ſurvey'd,
She ſpoke in terror, and thoſe worlds obey'd;
Where eaſtern GANGES rolls her rapid tide,
And ſilver INDUS winds her pearly ſide,
To where IBERUS cuts the fruitful plain,
And lazy SPANIARDS wear a monarch's chain;
The tyrant MOOR with them firſt deign'd to ſigh,
And bent beneath the ROMAN EAGLE's eye.

A SENATE counſell'd, *reverend with age*,
Each member *firm*, each patriot a *ſage*;
With ſnowy beards this *venerable* band
Diffus'd their tenets through a riſing land;
Impetuous *Faction* bid her children ceaſe,
And all was *unanimity and peace*;
Supported thus, the hardy legion flew,
And the wide world diſplay'd a deſolated view:
Though hoary Time has ſhewn this modern day,
Shall we be leſs unanimous than they?
Shall the bright ROMAN in this diſtant age,
Eclipſe the glories of the BRITISH page?

And

And they who drink fair THAMES's waters, bow
Leſs brave than they, who walk the banks of Po?

Thanks to the Gods! ſtill glows the BRITISH fire
With all the virtue Freedom can inſpire;
Inur'd to hardſhips from his cradle bred,
The young CHARACTACUS diſplays his martial head.

O'er the rough cliff he marks his harden'd way,
And toils inceſſant all the tedious day;
Save when the ſhepherd leaves the ſultry glade,
And ſeeks with oaten pipe his hawthorn ſhade;
To him he bends: a converſation gains,
He hears the news of all the village ſwains;
But when the tale, *The young* SYLVANO's *gone*
Amidſt the regions of another zone;
Gone like his gallant ſires, and diſtant far,
To fight for Freedom in the glorious war;
He ſtarts, he turns, at length he gives a ſigh,
And, O! like *him* he would not fear to die.

So the young lion from his mother's ſide,
Now bolder grown, ſurveys the foreſt wide;
But if perchance he ſmell th' inſtinctive trace,
He ſets his mane erect and lingers for the chace.

Such ſons the grateful ALBION can ſhew,
Such manly ſouls ſhe harbours for the foe.

No more let ROMAN proweſs be diſplay'd,
Nor think the BRITISH in their ſun ſhall fade;
In ev'ry port where Ocean rolls his tide,
Their fleets have rode with all the victor's pride;
Fair INDUS' waves beheld their nautic band,
And the young ſailor greet her ruby ſand;
From GANGES' ſtreams their fame was ſcatter'd o'er,
And reach'd the ſummit of IBERUS' ſhore;
No *ſtated pillars** gave the hero law,
They conquer'd more than ever ROMAN ſaw.

Yet ſtay: old ROME looks anxious at the ſkies,
And counts her conſtellations as they riſe;

See

* The Pillars of Hercules, near the Streights of Gibraltar, which the Romans ſuppoſed to be the boundaries of the weſtern world.

See all her FABII* and her SCIPIOS* ſhine,
And brave CAMILLUS* grace yon noble line;
Here ſtarts our *Engliſh Muſe*, and dares to ſay,
Intrepid WOLFE was full as brave as they.

But ſee, ſhe's fix'd on yon tranſcendant light,
She ſmiles yet weeps; 'tis CÆSAR in her ſight:
He, whoſe undaunted ſoul no dangers knew,
No threats could move, no enemy ſubdue;
On eagle's wing his flaming enſign bore,
And reap'd his honors from a diſtant ſhore;

* The family of the Fabii, who were all ſlain, to the number of three hundred, except one, have left the nobleſt example of love towards their country, and of that reſolution, which was the characteriſtic of the ancient Roman.—Scipio's bravery is beyond a doubt; I need only ſay in confirmation of this, that it required the utmoſt ſhare of courage to face a man who had ſpread the greateſt conſternation imaginable throughout all Italy, by his rapid and deciſive victories, Hannibal, a man who was poſſeſſed of the greateſt reſolution, the niceſt judgment, and a degree of policy that was ſcarce ever known to be at the command of one man. And is there one who can doubt the intrepidity of a Camillus, after all the ſignal ſervices he performed for his country? Eſteemed in the eyes of the world as theſe great men deſervedly are, it may appear rather bold to compare the actions of a modern Wolfe with theſe ſoldiers of antiquity; nevertheleſs I venture to affirm, by a juſt compariſon between the one and the other, conſidering all the circumſtances attending each, we ſhall as readily conſent that this Son of Britain is as worthy of the laurel of immortality as any of the heroes of Grecian or Roman hiſtory. Nay more ſo; he was poſſeſt of all the courage of a Fabius and a Camillus; he had all the prudence of a Scipio, the policy of an Hannibal, but more openneſs of ſoul, and our own records will inform us, he died more gloriouſly than any of them all.

The lofty SPANIARD bent the proſtrate knee,
And GALLIA's ſons lamented to be free.

But ſee BRITANNIA on yon rock recline,
She counts her conſtellations as they ſhine;
Yon orb ſhe views, and fears not to proclaim,
Her MARLBROUGH† equals all a CÆSAR's† fame.

In

† Who is there that has not heard of Cæſar? Who is there that will not confeſs him to have been a great man, an able and experienced ſoldier? But the more we conſider his conqueſts, the more we ſhall be inclined to think the balance will fall in favour of the gallant Marlbrough. It may be ſaid that Cæſar, at the hazard of his life, not only conquered every part of the then known world, but even found out new worlds to conquer; people barbarous and inhuman, people uncivilized, inhoſpitable, and terrible to the more refined ſtranger: but the Roman armies were veterans, long inured to conqueſt, and above all, had the advantages of the fineſt diſcipline: the remote nations he ſubdued were expoſed to every danger, without any diſcipline at all, entirely naked; on the contrary, the Roman was defended by a caſe of impenetrable armour; the leaſt ſtroke from any weapon could enter the bodies of the one, and ſubject them to immediate death, but great muſt the weapon be, and great the force, to pierce through the protection of the Roman ſhield. When Cæſar conquered Gaul, it was divided into innumerable diſtricts; every diſtrict had its own ſovereign, the conſequence of which was, they were involved in continual broils and tumults, every petty prince for ever fighting againſt his neighbour. Such was the ſituation of affairs on the arrival of Cæſar. As many of theſe ſovereigns were then in actual war with each other, they made no attempt to unite, and by that means were ſubdued one by one, an eaſy prey to their conquerors. I muſt not omit to ſay, that ſome even joined him to fight with greater effect againſt the oppoſite party, with whom they were then engaged in a war; ſo that diſcord was the grand cauſe of their reduction to the Roman empire, the arms of Cæſar only contributed a part: Much greater then can we boaſt a Marlbrough,

In early days the hardy GALLIA ſtood,
But fatal diſcord drain'd her kindred blood;
Each petty prince held out a tyrant's ſway,
And wiſh'd to ſee his neighbouring lord obey;
Thus would the waves of rapid MEUSE combine,
To check the waters of the ſwelling RHINE;
Divided thus, each petty chieftain fought,
And little diſtricts ſided where they thought;
Thus ſavage GAUL too long diſdain'd to reſt,
But tore her vitals from her reeking breaſt;
A CÆSAR came; how much to be deplor'd!
That *Diſcord* conquer'd more than CÆSAR's *ſword*;
But rapid MARLBROUGH bore the victor's laws,
And conquer'd all, *united in one cauſe.*

Thus when the ROMAN in the ranks of Death
Shews where her DECIUS drew his lateſt breath,
The *Britiſh Muſe* in bleeding tone ſhall tell
How worthy MONTAGU* and GRANVILLE† fell;

But

Marlbrough, who conquered the whole country, when all its former diſtricts were in one, all inſpired with the ſame ſentiments, all ſubject to the ſame prince, and all united in the grand object of defence.

* Montagu, who was created Earl of Sandwich, and grandfather of the preſent Earl, was

But ſee yon BRITON weep; methought he cry'd,
And ſeem'd to ſay, *A modern* FARMER *dy'd.*‡

But

one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed characters of his age; he had the honour of ſerving in conjunction with the immortal Blake in the time of Oliver Cromwell; he performed many gallant exploits in the reign of Charles II. againſt the Dutch. From his extenſive knowledge and his remarkable bravery, he was employed in affairs of the greateſt conſequence; he was once Commander in Chief of the Engliſh fleet, and was only ſuperſeded by the Duke of York, when he had then the honor of commanding the blue diviſion. Juſt before the engagement with Ruyter, he perceived the wind change to the ſouth, and immediately waited upon the Duke, to inform him, from the ſudden veering of the wind he could aſſure him the Dutch would immediately attack them; his Grace made anſwer, "What are you afraid, Montagu?"—a very ſevere reply to a man, whoſe courage could never be called in queſtion. "Do as you pleaſe," ſays Montagu, "but I ſhall prepare my own diviſion." He accordingly returned, and prepared himſelf; the enemy immediately approached, and but for his precaution the Engliſh fleet had been deſtroyed that day, his diviſion keeping an inceſſant fire againſt the whole of the enemy's fleet till the reſt could be got in readineſs; and ſo cloſe was he engaged, that after a very bloody conflict he was blown up with his own ſhip, the Royal James, after having ſhewn the greateſt prudence, and the moſt exalted fortitude of ſoul.

† Granville was ſent to intercept a Spaniſh ſquadron, but fell in with ſeveral ſhips of the line belonging to the enemy, and fighting for the ſpace of ſix hours againſt ten ſhips as large as his own, ſeeing no hopes of eſcaping, and unwilling to yield to any man whatever, he ſet fire to the powder room, and all on board inſtantly periſhed. Such inſtances of reſolution as theſe can never be outdone, though it is poſſible they can be equalled; and a Roman Decius, ſhould he meet them in the plains of Elyſium, need not bluſh to be ſeen in the preſence of theſe noble heroes.

‡ The gallant Farmer ſurely needs no encomiaſt; ſuch late proofs of intrepidity can never lie buried in oblivion. This great man, however, was commander of his Majeſty's ſhip the Quebec. In the afternoon of the 6th of October, 1779, he fell in with the Surveillante frigate of ſuperior force; they were obſtinately engaged for near four hours; he had ſilenced the French frigate, when by accident, generally ſuppoſed by the very quick fire from the Quebec's

guns,

But where the weſt fades purple to the ſight,
Yon planets ſhine with more than uſual light;
Two brother ſtars emit their piercing rays,
A CÆSAR ſeems to leſſen in their blaze,
The manly CURIUS ſhines above the reſt,
And ſtern FABRICIUS with unconquer'd breaſt.

No more the SAMNITE bears the flaming ſight,
But o'er the mountain marks his haſty flight;
THESSALIAN ranks in ſolemn ſilence yield,
And royal PYRRHUS flies the bloody field.

But view the mighty maſs, the *golden* ſtore,
And *preſents* offer'd from EPIRUS' ſhore;

guns, ſhe was ſoon in flames. The gallant Farmer perſuaded all his men to ſave their lives, if poſſible, and with much entreaty he prevailed upon them to deſert their Captain: had he but lowered his flag, he might have been alive at this day; but nobly diſdaining to yield upon any terms, he ſat with his head reclined upon the fluke of an anchor, and glorioufly periſhed. He had been wounded early in the engagement in his wriſt, and applied his handkerchief to the wound; but that could but little avail: another ſhot rent his collar bone, and in that ſituation he rather choſe to die at once honourably, than to prolong his life by any inglorious means: his ſhip was blown up with her colours flying. The great marks of honor and reſpect ſhewn to his ſurviving family, clearly evince the great regret of the public for the loſs of ſo dear a man.

The *ſteady* warriors ſpurn the *venal tribe*,
And love their *country* better than the *bribe*.

But ſee BRITANNIA from yon mountain riſe,
And point where CALPE mingles with the ſkies:
In joyful mood ſhe tunes the *victor*'s ſong,
And ſhews the SPANIARD and his *captive throng*;†
Admires *unbrib'd* FABRICIUS, and elate,
She ſmiles to think her RODNEY* is as great.

Long in his *peaceful* den, ſupinely laid,
The BRITISH LION ſlept beneath the ſhade;
No more his claws in reeking gore were dy'd,
No more the victim ſtruggled by his ſide;

But

† Sir George Rodney's late capture.

* Sir George Rodney, when laſt in France, underwent innumerable hardſhips, being ſo poor that very often he knew not where to get a dinner, and likewiſe unable to return to his own country. When he was in more than uſual diſtreſs, Sartine, knowing the merits of this diſtinguiſhed naval officer, and hoping he might be able to take advantage of his poverty, entertained him at his ſeat in the country for the ſpace of a month, and at laſt, after much heſitation, made an offer to employ him as Commander in Chief of the French fleet, and to give him ſuch a fortune, that he ſhould be for ever after independent. The noble Tar diſdained the bribe, and was near ſtriking the French Commandant of the Marine department; but told him, "he was ſure the offer came from his King, and," adds he, "if you would wiſh to overcome us, the nobleſt trial will be found the force of arms." In this corrupt, venal age, there is more merit

But *now* the piercing ſun finds out his bed,
The ſun of glory ſets above his head;
He wakes, he moves, at length he deigns to riſe,
And vivid fury ſparkles from his eyes;
From the deep foreſt ſee him bend his way,
He roars, he ſhakes his tail, and watches for his prey.

Beware, ye wolves, on ALPINE mountains bred,
And fear *that lion*, by whoſe fangs ye bled;
Ye PYRENEAN wolves forſake the glade,
And ſeek your caverns in the ſylvan ſhade,
For know he comes, unequal in his might,
And burns impatient for the deadly fight.

So ruſh'd our EDWARD on fair CRESSY's plain,
And groaning PHILIP ſaw his legions ſlain;
Twice forty ſtandards, in the battle's heat,
Were lay'd ſubmiſſive at the victor's feet;

BOHE-

merit in this gallant officer, than in a Curius and Fabricius, who, though they ſpurn'd immenſe preſents offered by the enemy, lived in ſuch a time, when bribery, even in private life, (where only an individual might ſuffer,) was reckoned a crime of the deepeſt dye.

BOHEMIA§ fell, as in the front he fought,
And gain'd the wiſh his anxious ſoul had ſought.

No leſs *young* EDWARD‖ than his *ſire* diſplay'd
Thoſe feats which only with the Muſe ſhall fade.
A *ſon* of FRANCE, the royal JOHN deplor'd
That fate, which gave him to an ENGLISH *ſword;*
That glorious day our *native heroes* won,
And mournful FRANCE bewail'd her *captive* ſon.

Still o'er the tented field we'll boldly roam,
And trace the waters of the purple SOMME;
Then o'er the hills we'll take a lofty flight,
Where AGINCOURT ſhall greet our longing ſight:
But ſee her plains in beauteous order riſe,
Yon ancient turrets rival with the ſkies:
'Twas there the gallant HENRY fought his way,
And won the trophies of that honour'd day:
'Twas there ALENCON gave the furious ſtroke,
The crown was ſever'd but the fury broke:

There

§ The King of Bohemia, who though blind, was nevertheleſs led into battle, and died fighting for France, according to his wiſh.

‖ The battle of Poictiers.

There was the ſpot where gallant SUFFOLK bled,
And ENGLAND ſaw her YORK amidſt the dead.

But later times with pleaſure we can trace,
And later heroes from that ancient race;
Conceive the SPANIARD, with deſpotic ſway,
Deviſing how the BRITON ſhould obey;
The vaſt ARMADA forms one dreadful chain,
And ſeems to bind the limits of the main;
But while theſe fierce exulting lords conſpire,
An HOWARD meets them, with an HOWARD's fire:
Experienc'd DRAKE flies on to meet a blow,
He ſpeaks in thunder, and alarms the foe:
The gallant FORBISHER and HAWKINS vie,
And as they rival, ſo to riſe or die:
But now the ſcene is o'er; IBERIA fled,
And mourn'd her ſons, her choiceſt warriors dead.

But here the Muſe entwines her garland bays,
And other heroes claim the public praiſe:
Shall gallant BLAKE her glorious wreath forego,
Who bravely won it from an hardy foe?

Shall RUSSEL fall beneath the dome of Fame
When FRANCE could fall but at the hero's name?
Shall VERNON ſink in ſome degraded ſeat,
Who brought the SPANIARD weeping to his feet?
No; like the ſtars of morn and eve they'll riſe,
And laſt for ever to illume the ſkies.

In eaſtern ſphere a POCOCK fought our cauſe,
And happy Vict'ry ſhouted forth applauſe;
The great BOSCAWEN with the hero ſhone;
And ROWLEY claim'd no honors but his own.

Yet in theſe days we feel *that gen'rous flame*
That rais'd the trophy to the warrior's name;
A living HAWKE can teach us how to *ſoar*,
And reap freſh honors from the *Gallic ſhore*;
A VERNON,* ROWLEY can expand their fires,
And ſhew the long-loſt image of their ſires;

While

* Theſe gentlemen are now living, and bid fair to imitate their fathers, who have made ſo conſiderable a figure in naval hiſtory. Admiral Vernon commands in the Eaſt Indies, and Admiral Rowley a diviſion under Sir George Rodney in the Weſt; where he has been particularly remarked for his diligence and activity.

While RODNEYS, PARKERS, monuments ſhall raiſe,
And teach their ſons to rival in their blaze.

Such men, my Lord, were objects of your choice,
And in ſuch ſons BRITANNIA ſhall rejoice;
Their conq'ring ſwords far-diſtant worlds ſhall gain,
And re-aſſume the trident of the main;
The noble SPANIARD ſhall lament he bled,
And *perjur'd* FRANCE in ſhame conceal her head;
Go on; your heroes ſhall encreaſe in fame,
And ENGLAND not contemn her SANDWICH' name.

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While Robert's Banners, mourning flout the skie,
And teach their Lions to rival in their blare.

Such men, my Lord, were objects of your choice,
And in such lons Britannia shall rejoice:
Their conq'ring Fworde fan-diant worlds shall grin,
And re-adorne the trident of the main;
The noble Spirit shall lancate the bled,
And Amy's Frames in flame conceal her head;
Or on; your heroes shall encrease in fame,
And England not conteum her SANDWICH name.